

# **INAUGURATION SPEECH**

**Revised by BY 1/3/03**

JUDGE FLEMING.

CONGRESSMAN BARNARD.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS.

MY FELLOW CITIZENS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE TODAY.

I AM HONORED THAT THE VOTERS OF THE CITY OF AUGUSTA HAVE SEEN FIT TO RETURN ME TO OFFICE FOR A SECOND TERM AS MAYOR.

FIRST, I WANT TO SAY, LIKE YOU, I WANT THE BEST FOR OUR FAMILIES AND OUR CITY.

WE HAVE A TREMENDOUS LEGACY. FOR 266 YEARS, AUGUSTA HAS BEEN ONE OF THE GREATEST CITIES IN THE SOUTHEAST.

OUR CITY IS THE ECONOMIC ENGINE THAT DRIVES THIS REGION OF GEORGIA AND SOUTH CAROLINA.

WE ARE A CITY WITH A GREAT HISTORY AND A BRIGHT FUTURE.

TODAY, WE ARE AT A CROSSROADS. AND, THE ROAD WE CHOOSE TO TAKE FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS WILL DETERMINE OUR DESTINY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

WE HAVE TWO DISTINCT CHOICES.

ONE DIRECTION WILL LEAD US DOWN THE ROAD OF HEALING AND RECOVERY. IT IS A PATH THAT WILL ALLOW US TO ACHIEVE THE GROWTH AND PROSPERITY THAT THIS CITY AND HER CITIZENS DESERVE.

THIS IS A ROAD THAT WILL INDEED BRIDGE GAPS, BOTH REAL AND IMAGINED, AND THE ROAD THAT WILL ALLOW US TO BE MORE SENSITIVE TO THE PUBLIC'S NEEDS.

THE OTHER ROAD LEADS TO A PLACE THAT ENSURES MEDIOCRITY AND PROTECTS THE STATUS QUO.

AND I'M SURE YOU WOULD AGREE WITH ME IN SAYING THIS CHOICE IS NOT AN OPTION.

HISTORIC POLITICAL CHANGES HAVE LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE TASK THAT LIES AHEAD.

I'M PROUD AND EXCITED TO BE YOUR MAYOR DURING A PERIOD THAT, IN MY OPINION, WILL BE A RENAISSANCE FOR AUGUSTA AND THE REST OF OUR REGION.

THE POTENTIAL FOR AUGUSTA IS UNLIMITED.

OUR WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES ARE PLENTIFUL...OUR POPULATION IS DIVERSE AND GROWING.

OUR ECONOMY IS STRONG WITH FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES... DEDICATED ENTREPRENEURS... AND STATE AND FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA, AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY, PAINE COLLEGE, AND FORT GORDON.

WE HAVE IMPORTANT NEIGHBORS IN COLUMBIA AND AIKEN COUNTIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S SAVANNAH RIVER SITE.

OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS BLESSED WITH A LOYAL AND DEDICATED WORKFORCE, AND OUR SISTER GOVERNMENTS IN HEPHZIBAH AND BLYTHE ADD TO THE STABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES.

THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT WE HAVE A CITY AND REGION THAT POSSESS UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITIES THAT MAKE THIS AREA ONE OF THE MOST DESIRABLE AND LIVABLE IN THE SOUTHEAST AND THE NATION.

A RECENT SURVEY PUBLISHED IN THE COLUMBIA NEWS-TIMES SUGGESTS THAT MOST GEORGIANS WOULD PREFER THAT ELECTED OFFICIALS SKIP THE FIGHT OVER SYMBOLS AND PERSONALITIES.

INSTEAD, YOU WANT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO ROLL UP THEIR SLEEVES AND GET TO WORK ON THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIVES.

THESE ARE THE ISSUES THAT MATTER TO YOU – AND THE ISSUES THAT CAN TRULY MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

TO MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE TASK AHEAD, I WILL UNDERTAKE A LISTENING TOUR

THROUGHOUT OUR CITY.

I WILL BE MEETING WITH INDIVIDUALS, NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS, CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHERS TO HEAR FROM OUR CITIZENS.

I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR CONCERNS, YOUR PRIORITIES, YOUR NEEDS, WANTS AND DESIRES – HEAR IT DIRECTLY FROM YOU, NOT FILTERED THROUGH SELF-ANOINTED SPOKESMEN.

PRESIDENT LYNDON BANES JOHNSON BEST DESCRIBED CITIES WHEN HE SAID...

THE AMERICAN CITY SHOULD BE A COLLECTION OF COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERY MEMBER HAS A RIGHT TO BELONG.

IT SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE EVERY MAN FEELS SAFE ON HIS STREETS AND IN THE HOUSE OF HIS FRIENDS.

IT SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE EACH INDIVIDUAL’S DIGNITY AND SELF RESPECT IS STRENGTHENED BY THE RESPECT AND AFFECTION OF HIS NEIGHBORS.

JOHNSON WENT ON THE SAY...

IT SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE EACH OF US CAN FIND THE SATISFACTION AND WARMTH WHICH COMES FROM BEING A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY OF MAN.

THIS IS WHAT MAN SOUGHT AT THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION.

IT IS WHAT WE SEEK TODAY.

TO BEGIN THE HEALING PROCESS THAT OUR COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS NEEDS, WANTS AND DESIRES, I AM EXTENDING MY HAND TO THE LEADERS OF GOVERNMENT, THE LEADERS OF BUSINESS AND THE ENTIRE CITIZENRY TO COME TOGETHER IN A SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION FOR PROGRESS.

DIVISIVENESS IS A ROADMAP TO FAILURE.

I AM NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT FAILURE, AND I KNOW YOU WON’T EITHER.

IN CLOSING, I’D LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO MY ELECTION – NOT ONLY CAMPAIGN FUNDS, AS NECESSARY AS THEY ARE, BUT ACTIVE SUPPORT, THOUGHTFUL COUNSEL, SOUND

ADVICE, HOSTING DUTIES, COOKING, DECORATING, STUFFING ENVELOPES, MAKING CALLS – IT ALL MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

AND MOST OF ALL, MY THANKS TO MY SUPPORTIVE WIFE - GWEN FULCHER YOUNG.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE VOTERS OF AUGUSTA, WHO BY YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HAVE PROVEN ONCE AGAIN WHAT A GREAT NATION WE LIVE IN.

IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE AND PRAYER THAT EVERYONE WILL TAKE UP MY CHALLENGE AND LET THIS BE A NEW BEGINNING FOR US ALL.

TO PARAPHRASE FORMER GEORGIA LEGISLATOR DAN PONDER...

GOD HAS PUT US IN AUGUSTA. NOW, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

MAY GOD BLESS AUGUSTA. MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.